5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

tree eighty feet high. Last year an old man nearly seventy years of age had climbed up this tree to prune some of the top branches. Tree-climbing is one of the things these aborigines of West China are expert at. I have seen boys go up tall trees like a set of monkeys. When I saw some boys climb nimbly up tall pine-trees with all the lower branches cut away I thought they looked like the natives of the Malay States, who climb the palms with great dexterity and celerity.

Snow fell towards evening, and we finished our day's journey with the white flakes falling everywhere, and so there was no chance of photographing the village where we were to stop the night. A fine wall surrounded the village, and the wall was loopholed all around with slanting holes. These loopholes were about the height of one's shoulder, and everything was ready for the repelling of a sudden attack.

We found at this village that the Nosu people do not use the copper cash which are found all over China, and that barter is in full swing. When we were there salt was largely the medium of exchange. The salt used was the black variety produced at Tsi Liu Ching and exported over so wide an area in West China. One catty of salt purchased four catties of honey. Two catties of salt purchased one catty of bees-wax. Two catties of salt purchased one of small dried mushrooms, the kind so much used in the *recherché* feasts of China. Two of salt also purchased one of raw hide. Labour was also paid for in salt. The comparative dearness of salt, none of which was produced in the parts of Nosuland I visited, made it too valuable an article to be often eaten, and much of the food consumed by the people is never flavoured with salt.

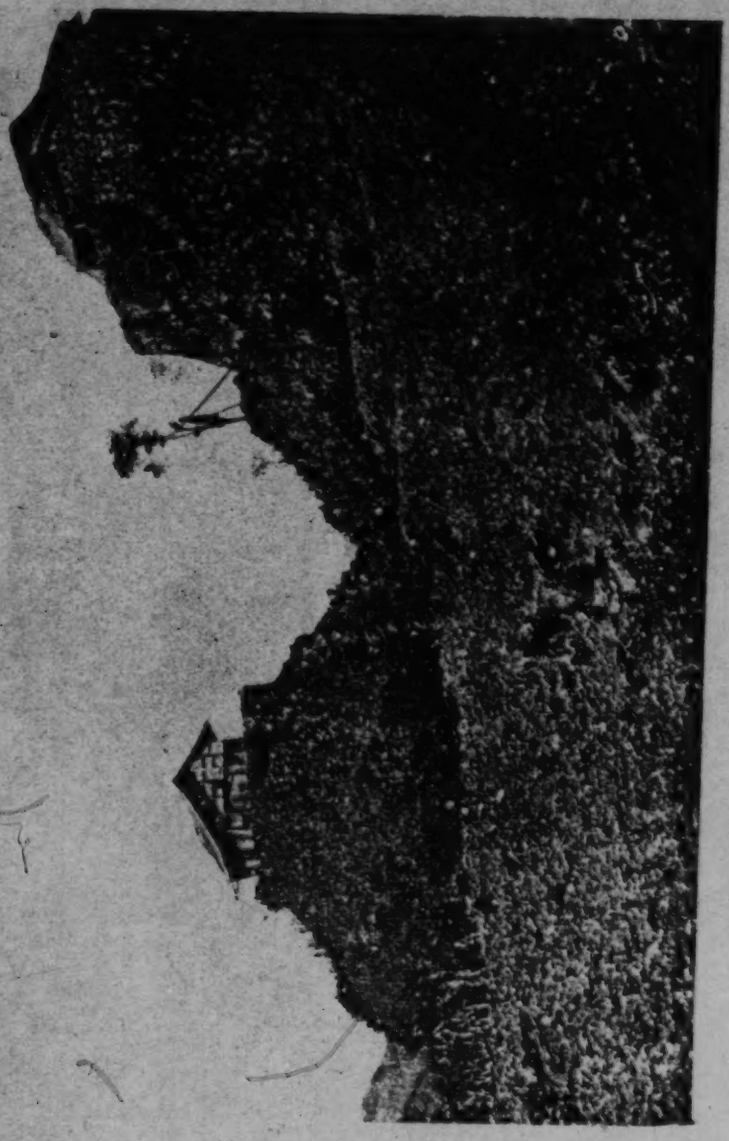
5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

obedience to this verdict the stern Earth Eye who had so defied all the teaching of the Christians pulled his castle right down, and at great expense rebuilt it less than half-a-mile away. Since the necromancer's advice has been carried out there have been one or two births in the harem, which are always announced as sons. In some strange way these sons of Lo-chee, when they grow up, turn into daughters. Last year there was another bulletin announced, and it was to the effect that one of the Mrs Lo-chees had presented her husband with a son. It is too early yet to know whether the great change will take place with this one also. Let us hope, for the father's sake, that it will remain a son. Possibly if there were an heir to the estates the great Earth Eye would be more amenable to reason and the dictates of humanity.

A few years ago the principal building in another Earth Eye's castle, where Lo-chee's daughter went as wife, formed a peculiar landmark in the district. The castle is built on the extreme point of a steep hill at the foot of which two rivers run to a junction. Except to modern guns, the castle is almost impregnable. In the days when it was built it was so. The main building was all awry. One end of it was nearly twice as wide as the other, and the appearance of the crooked roof, narrow on the north side and wide on the south, was most uncanny. In passing by one wondered what kind of a place there could be on the top of the steep cliff. Wizards had been at work again, and by their advice this bizarre building had been erected in this wild place so difficult of access. No luck has, however, come to the three brothers living there, for in spite of seven or eight wives between them, I have never heard of the birth of a son and heir to the great castle and immense estates.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

712



Cosses of Refuge Built on the Tops of High Hills

[Plate facing p. 240]